

SPECIFICATION

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[SMOKING SYSTEM COMPRISED OF A JEWELRY OR ORNAMENT SMOKING DEVICE AND A METHOD OF FORMING A SMOKING MIXTURE]

Background of Invention

[0001] Field of the Invention

[0002] The invention relates to a smoking system. More particularly, the invention provides a smoking system that is comprised of an ornament or jewelry smoking device and a method of forming a smoking mixture that allows a more flavorful and economical smoking.

[0003] Description of the Related Art

[0004] In the tobacco industry, many researches have been developed at different levels to provide the user with better smoking meanwhile trying to minimize its negative effects. Those researches have met various levels of success by providing various types of smoking devices and smoking mixtures.

[0005] In US Patent No. 4,243,058, the applicant of the present application has previously disclosed a jewelry smoking device in which a smoking device is concealed in a jewelry item. This known jewelry smoking device has an improved aesthetic aspect, offering the possibility of being worn as an item of jewelry and, when desired, used as a smoking device.

[0006] However, the above jewelry smoking device only concerns a concealment aspect

and fails to provide an improvement regarding some functional aspects in a smoking purpose.

Summary of Invention

[0007] An aspect of the invention is therefore to provide a smoking system that is respectively comprised of a smoking device camouflaged in an ornament or jewelry aspect and a method of forming a pre-shaped structure of smoking mixture that provides a more comfortable, economical, and flexible smoking with less odor.

[0008] To accomplish the above and other objectives, the ornament/jewelry smoking device includes an external camouflaging body that is comprised of a thermally insulating material. The thermally insulating material enables a user to hold the smoking device and smoke without being scalded. With a concealment in the aspect of an ornamental item, the camouflaging body is externally formed in an ornamental shape adequate to conceal the elements of the smoking device that are functionally directed to a smoking purpose. The camouflaging body respectively conceals a first opening in which a screen receptacle is mounted to receive a smoking mixture, and a second opening that communicates with the first opening and defines a mouthpiece through which a user draws smoke. The screen receptacle enables the placement of smoking mixture while blocking its passage through the mouthpiece when puffs are drawn there through. A filter is further provided within the smoking device to filter drawn smoke.

[0009] Within the above ornament/jewelry smoking device, the screen receptacle is differently shaped and sized to receive an amount of smoking mixture that is in accordance with a desired number of puffs.

[0010] According to an embodiment of the invention in which the smoking mixture is in a loose form, the screen receptacle is formed in an adequate shape, such as a funnel shape, so as to enable the smoking mixture to be placed in the smoking device by dipping the funnel-shaped screen receptacle in the loose smoking mixture.

[0011] According to another variant embodiment, the screen receptacle is detachably mounted and the camouflaging body further includes a hollow interior that communicates with the screen receptacle, the ornament/jewelry smoking device is

thereby configured to be able to receive water therein by removing the screen receptacle. The introduction of water enables to cool down the smoke temperature, which renders drawn puffs less harsh.

[0012] To enable the user to wear the smoking device as a jewelry item, the smoking device is further provided with a mounting element that enables the mount of the jewelry smoking device on the user. According to the type of the mounting element, the smoking device therefore can be varied in different types of jewelry items.

[0013] In accordance with the above and other objectives, the smoking system of the invention further comprises a method of forming a pre-shaped structure of smoking mixture. The pre-shaped structure of the smoking mixture is achieved by first forming the smoking mixture in a plurality of basic regularly shaped constitutions such as spheres. The basic constitutions are compacted to obtain a pre-shaped form of smoking mixture that, provided with inner voids allowing air/smoke passage, enables to achieve a more even burning and a more flavorful smoking with less odor. Since a more concentrated effect hence is obtained, satisfaction is economically obtained from just a few puffs. As a result, the pre-shaped smoking mixture has a smaller size and may be favorably packaged under various shapes and forms.

[0014] According to an embodiment of the invention, a packaging form of the pre-shaped smoking mixture includes a screen receptacle that is assembled with the pre-shaped smoking mixture. To perform smoking, the assembly of the screen receptacle with the pre-shaped smoking mixture is mounted to the first opening of the ornament/jewelry smoking device of the invention. Smoking then is achieved by drawing puffs from the mouthpiece.

[0015] According to another variant example, a packaging form of the pre-shaped smoking mixture includes a dispenser in which is received the pre-shaped smoking mixture. The dispenser comprises a container body to which is movably mounted a cover. By opening the cover, a pre-shaped smoking mixture contained in the container body can be taken out and placed in a smoking device to be smoked.

[0016] It is to be understood that both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary, and are intended to provide further

explanation of the invention as claimed.

Brief Description of Drawings

- [0017] The accompanying drawings are included to provide a further understanding of the invention, and are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification. The drawings illustrate embodiments of the invention and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the invention. In the drawings,
- [0018] FIG. 1A through FIG. 1J are various schematic views illustrating an ornament and/or jewelry smoking device according to various embodiments of the invention;
- [0019] FIG. 2A and FIG. 2B are two schematic views illustrating a pre-shaped structure of smoking mixture formed according to an embodiment of the invention; and
- [0020] FIG. 3A through FIG. 3C are schematic views illustrating various ways of packaging the pre-shaped structure of smoking mixture according to various embodiments of the invention.

Detailed Description

- [0021] The following detailed description of the embodiments and examples of the present invention with reference to the accompanying drawings is only illustrative and not limiting. Wherever possible in the following description and accompanying drawings, like reference numerals and symbols will refer to like elements and parts unless otherwise described. The invention principally provides a smoking system that is comprised a jewelry or ornament smoking device and a novel method of forming a smoking mixture.
- [0022] Referring now to FIG. 1A through FIG. 1F, various schematic views illustrate a smoking device of the smoking system according to a first embodiment of the invention. As shown in the perspective view of FIG. 1A, a smoking device according to the invention comprises an outer camouflaging body 102 and an internal body 110. The camouflaging body 102 externally presents an ornamental shape (FIG. 1A illustrates an example of figurine) that should be pleasant and further is adapted to conceal the internal body 110 of the smoking device. The camouflaging body 102 is preferably made of a thermally resistant and insulating material to enable the user to

safely hold the smoking device and smoke without being scalded. Alternatively, the thermally insulating material may be externally formed on the camouflaging body 102 (not shown). By means of the camouflaging body 102, the smoking device of the invention therefore can be concealed in, for example, an ornamental item.

[0023] FIG. 1B through FIG. 1F are various views that illustrate the internal body 110 of a smoking device according to an embodiment of the invention. The elements of the internal body 110 as described hereafter may be formed directly in the outer camouflaging body 102 in a single body and/or constituted of separately formed elements that are assembled within the camouflaging body 102.

[0024] In the illustrated example, the internal body 110 comprises an upper cover 115 that is pivotally mounted to a base 120, and a flap 117 that is pivotally mounted to one side of the base 120. The upper cover 115 hence is capable of rotating to cover or uncover a recessed receptacle 122 formed in the base 120, constituting a bowl for receiving smoking mixtures. By rotation, the flap 117 covers or uncovers an opening formed on the corresponding side of the base 120 through which is mounted a telescopic tube 130. It should be apparent that the flap, not restricted to the above mount, may be differently mounted to the base 120 in, for example, a slidable manner to cover and uncover the telescopic tube 130.

[0025] The telescopic tube 130 includes an inner conduit 132 and can be retracted for concealment within the base 120 or extended outwardly terminating in a mouthpiece 134 to enable smoking. The inner conduit 132 runs along the telescopic tube 130 and terminates in mouthpiece 134 at one end, and in the receptacle 112 within the base 120 at another opposite end. At the location where the inner conduit 132 communicates with the receptacle 122 are interposed a screen 124 and a filter 126. The screen 124 typically is provided with small apertures to allow passage of air/smoke while blocking passage of smoking mixture through the inner conduit 132 when puffs are drawn from the mouthpiece 134. The filter 124 enables to filter the air/smoke drawn from the smoking mixture in the receptacle 122 through the inner conduit 132. The screen 124 is preferably placed in a manner to be in interposition between the receptacle 122 and the filter 126 so that the filter 126 can be protected from infiltration of smoking mixtures therein and thereby have a longer service life.

Alternatively, the screen 124 and the filter 126 may be formed in one piece.

[0026] In the above description, the screen 124 is illustrated as being a separate element mounted proximate to the receptacle 122 to block passage of the smoking mixture. However, the screen 124 may be formed in a manner to constitute a receptacle for receiving smoking mixtures as described below.

[0027] Referring to FIG. 1F, a cross-sectional view schematically illustrates a smoking device of the smoking system according to another embodiment of the invention. In the present embodiment, the smoking device is comprised of a hollow base 220 and, similar the above example, a flap 217 is mounted to the base 220 to cover and uncover a telescopic tube 230 at a side of the base 220. The telescopic tube 230 extends to a location proximate to a screen 222, formed in the shape of a receptacle that is mounted to an opening of the hollow base 220. To perform smoking, a smoking mixture is placed within the screen receptacle 222, and puffs are drawn through the mouthpiece 234 and inner conduit 232 of the telescopic tube 230. As described in the previous embodiment, a filter 226 may be further placed at an end of the inner conduit 232 to filter drawn smoke. The filter 226 may be detachably mounted to the smoking device to facilitate its replacement. Alternatively, the filter may be also conveniently incorporated with the screen receptacle in one piece.

[0028] As shown in FIG. 1F, the screen receptacle 222 may be possibly designed in a manner to be detachably mounted to the hollow base 220. The smoking device hence can be transformed into a so-called "water" pipe in the following manner. The screen receptacle 222 is detached from the base 220 to expose an opening through which water 250 is introduced within the hollow interior of the base 220, and the receptacle screen 222 then is re-disposed onto the base 220, ready to receive a smoking mixture therein. The presence of water within the hollow base 220 enables to cool down the temperature of the smoke drawn through the inner conduit 232. Drawn puffs are therefore less harsh.

[0029] The above-described example of smoking device is concealed in an ornamental item that may be placed on, for example, a shelf or a desk. However, not limited to an ornamental item, the concealment of the smoking device can be favorably achieved in an item of jewelry the user may wear with him/her. FIG. 1G illustrates a first example

of a jewelry smoking device of the invention. A jewelry smoking device may be achieved from the ornamental smoking device described above by simply mounting an additional chain or fob thereto. As shown in FIG. 1G, the ornament smoking device hence may become, for example, a key chain. An example of another type of jewelry smoking device may be envisaged as described hereafter with reference to FIG. 1H and FIG. 1J.

[0030] FIG. 1H is an external perspective view that illustrates a jewelry smoking device according to another variant embodiment of the invention. FIG. 1I is a cross-sectional view of the jewelry smoking device shown in FIG. 1H. As illustrated, the smoking device 300 of the invention may be concealed in, for example, a jewelry item carried by means of a necklace 390 that passes through a holding ring 380 provided on a body 320 of the smoking device 300. The ornamental shape of the jewelry concealment formed on the body 320 may be designed as desired ("fish" shape illustrated). The user therefore can wear the above smoking device 300 as a jewelry item of a necklace type and, when desired, uses it as a smoking device in the following manner.

[0031] As shown in the sectional view of FIG. 1I, the jewelry smoking device 300 is comprised of a hollow body 320 that is preferably made of a thermally resistant insulating material so that scalding is prevented. The hollow body 320 includes a hollow interior 326 that communicates with a first outer opening 324 at, for example, the mouth of the fish and a second outer opening 328 through, for example, a lower fin of the fish shape serving as a pipe stem. The lower fin is rotatably mounted to the hollow body 320 via, for example, a hollow sleeve 335. It will be understood that the above rotary connection through the hollow sleeve 335 may be achieved via other adequate mounting means known in the art to accomplish such a connection. A screen receptacle 322 is further permanently or detachably mounted to the first opening 324 to receive a smoking mixture. If the user wants to smoke, he/she places the smoking mixture in the screen receptacle 322, rotates the pipe stem to a position of adequate orientation relative to the body 320 for convenient smoking, and abuts his/her mouth against the second opening 328. Puffs then can be drawn. Alternatively, the screen receptacle 322 may be shaped in, for example, a funnel profile so as to facilitate a dipping of the funnel-shaped receptacle into, for example,

cut loose tobacco. The size and shape of the screen receptacle 322 hence can be adequately adapted and changed to receive an amount of smoking mixture in accordance with the desired number of drawn puffs.

[0032] Besides necklace jewelry items as described above, the smoking device of the invention may be concealed in many other types of jewelry items according to the type of mounting elements provided. In the above example, a small holding ring 380 is provided to mount the jewelry smoking device to a necklace 390, thereby accommodating the smoking device to a necklace jewelry item. However, should a pin or a clasp (not illustrated) is mounted on the body 320, and the smoking device is concealed in a broach jewelry to be worn on a cloth. Similarly, if a finger ring (not illustrated) is mounted to the body 320, the smoking device consequently may be concealed in a jewelry item of finger ring. Additionally, instead of a specific assembly of a separate mounting element on the body 320, the mounting element alternatively may be directly incorporated in the design of the jewelry smoking device. Hence as exemplary illustrated in FIG. 1J, a hole 385 may be directly incorporated within the design of the body 320 and placed, for example, at the connecting portion between the rear fin and the body of the fish shape to enable the passage of the necklace 390. It would be therefore apparent that different types of jewelry items may be adequate as concealment of the smoking device of the invention by the disposition of adapted mounting elements thereon.

[0033] The smoking system of the invention further provides a structure of smoking mixture that is specifically well-adapted to be smoked by means of the above ornament/jewelry smoking device of the invention, and, more generally, will be also suitable for being smoked by means of any types of smoking devices.

[0034] Tobacco and smoking mixtures are traditionally formed in stringy, uneven, and irregular shapes. However, the applicant has discovered that the quality of the smoke is enhanced if the smoking mixture is specifically formed in accordance with the invention as follows. The smoking mixture is first formed in basic regularly shaped constitutions such as, for example, spherical balls 450 of FIG. 2A. Since a smoking mixture may blend different constituents of smoking material, the burning of each constituent may not be identical within a same smoking mixture. Hence, as illustrated,

the size of the spheres 450 may be set differently in accordance with each constituent of the smoking mixture. The spheres 450 are combined and compacted in a pre-shaped form such as, for example, funnel-shaped plug 460 shown in FIG. 2B. The use of the term "pre-shaped" is intended to differentiate from the traditional smoking mixture of tobacco usually stringy, uneven and of irregular shapes. The pre-shaped smoking mixture 460 then can be fitted into a receptacle bowl of a smoking device to be smoked. The compacted spheres create voids within the plug 460 that allow fluid passages of smoke and air there through. As illustrated in FIG. 2B, a hollow interior may be specifically arranged within the plug 460 for the purpose of air and smoke passage. By such an arrangement, a more even burning and a cooler and more flavorful smoke are favorably achieved with fewer odors. To provide optimal results, the density of voids or porosity can be set as desired by controlling the size, the size distribution and the compacting pressure of the basic constitutions 450. Those parameters thus can be adequately changed for different smoking mixtures having different composition and dosages.

[0035] FIG. 2B further shows that the plug 460 is distinguished into a plurality of portions (464a, 464b, 464c) via precut lines 462 of perforations. Each portion (464a, 464b, 464c) corresponds to a predetermined number of puffs. The user therefore can manually preset the plug 460 to a desired number of puffs by separating the plug 460 in the adequate number of portions (464a, 464b, 464c). As a result, the level of satisfaction and the desired duration of smoking can be approximately programmed.

[0036] Since the pre-shaped smoking mixture, formed according to the invention such as described above, allows to obtain a more flavorful smoke and a more concentrated effect, satisfaction is therefore economically obtained from just a few puffs. It should be noted that a pre-shaped form such as plug 460 may be formed by compacting basic constitutions of smoking mixture that are different from spheres 450. Conical or disk shapes of smoking mixture, for example, may be also envisaged. Similarly, the above shape of plug 460 is not restrictive and other shapes of compacted smoking mixtures, such as pellet or pill shapes, may be also possible. This therefore opens novel approaches to packaging and merchandizing as described hereafter.

[0037] If the pre-shaped form of compacted smoking mixture is, for example, such as

plug 460, it may be packaged within a plastics film 480, as illustrated in FIG. 3A. A cut 482 is formed on a bottom of the plastics film 480. By squeezing in the directions indicated by the arrows, the cut 482 opens and the user can take out the plug 460.

[0038] Since the pre-shaped form of compacted smoking mixture may appear under various aspects, each pre-shaped form, for example plug 460, may be additionally packaged with a screen receptacle 470 (a filter may be also added (not illustrated)), as shown in FIG. 3B. The screen receptacle 470 is shaped with an inner profile compliant to the shape of the plug 460 so that both may be packaged in an assembled manner within the plastics film 480. Such a form of packaging is particularly adapted to a smoking device of the invention such as described in FIG. 1H and FIG. 1I. The user just has to remove the plastics film 480, and dispose the assembly of both plug 460 and screen receptacle 470 in the opening 324 (see FIG. 1I) of the smoking device provided for this purpose. By packaging an adequately shaped screen receptacle with the pre-shaped smoking mixture, more flexibility hence is obtained since a same basic smoking device can accommodate different shapes of pre-shaped smoking mixtures. It should be understood that other forms of pre-shaped and compacted smoking mixtures may be also advantageous, as illustrated in the example of FIG. 3C.

[0039] In the example of FIG. 3C, the pre-shaped smoking mixture is shaped in pellet 560. A plurality of pellets 560 are provided within a dispenser 500 comprised of a container body 506 and a cover 502 rotatably mounted to the container body 506 via a hinge 504. To perform smoking, the user rotates the cover 502 to open the container body 506, takes out a pellet 560, and places the pellet 560 in a smoking device to smoke. A form of packaging of the pre-shaped smoking mixtures under the aspect of dispensers can be therefore envisaged. It should be understood that besides the above-illustrated example, other forms of dispensers are also adequate such as birth control pill dispensers, "Pez" type dispensers, trigger-type dispenser, etc.

[0040] As described above, by providing a novel form of pre-shaped smoking mixture that can be packaged in a manner completely different from the prior art, the invention thus also proposes a novel method of smoking that, compared with the traditional way, is more economical, more convenient and flexible, and provides the smoker with more satisfaction. It should be readily appreciated that the above

description only presents some specific and not restrictive examples of the many different ways of packaging the pre-shaped smoking mixture of the invention that may be envisaged according to the specific shapes of the pre-shaped smoking mixture, as disclosed in the invention.

[0041] As described above, the invention therefore provides a smoking system that is comprised of an ornament or jewelry smoking device and a method of forming a smoking mixture. The ornament/jewelry smoking device is externally camouflaged in an ornament or jewelry aspect. The outward body of the smoking device is made of a thermally resistant insulating material so as to prevent the user from being scalded while smoking. The smoking device is provided with a filter and a screen receptacle for receiving a smoking mixture. The screen receptacle may be further detachably mounted to a hollow base of the smoking device so that water can be introduced in the smoking device. Thereby is achieved a smoking device in which smoke temperature can be cooled down by means of the introduced water. A mouthpiece in the form of an opening is further arranged on the smoking device, the mouthpiece communicating with the screen receptacle.

[0042] The smoking device is camouflaged in either an ornament item or a jewelry item the user can wear with him/her. To wear the smoking device as a jewelry item, various types of mounting elements are provided on the smoking device to adapt the smoking device into the desired type of jewelry item.

[0043] The smoking system of the invention further comprises a method of forming a structure of pre-shaped smoking mixture. The smoking mixture is first formed into a plurality of regularly shaped basic constitutions such as spheres. Those regularly shaped constitutions are compacted into a pre-shaped form of smoking mixture that is provided with a plurality of inner voids. This pre-shaped form of smoking mixture provides a more concentrated effect, so that satisfaction can be economically attained with a few puffs. As a result, packaging of the pre-shaped smoking mixture is smaller and further can be varied in many forms.

[0044] In an embodiment, a packaging form is comprised of the pre-shaped smoking mixture assembled with a screen receptacle adequately shaped. The pre-shaped smoking mixture is smoked by mounting the pre-packaged assembly of both screen

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[0046] It should be apparent to those skilled in the art that other structures that are obtained from various modifications and variations of various parts of the above-described structures of the invention would be possible without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention as illustrated herein. Therefore, the above description of embodiments and examples only illustrates specific ways of making and performing the invention that, consequently, should cover variations and modifications thereof, provided they fall within the inventive concepts as defined in the following claims.